



2014

CAREER GUIDE

Welcome to GetSmarter's Career Guide for 2014. This guide has been created to help you, the South African working professional, develop a better understanding of the current career landscape in order to advance your career. Use it to equip yourself with the practical tips and knowledge needed to stand out in an ever-changing and uncertain work landscape.

INTRODUCTION

While your career may not be your entire life focus, it does take up a very large portion of your time. Let's face it; it's a pretty big deal. The good news is that the fate of your career is now in your hands.

In 2014, the responsibility for career management has shifted to you, the individual. Achieving success in your career is an active process of identifying market needs, defining your personal intentions, developing yourself as a project, and marketing your personal brand. This practical guide will assist you in taking charge of your career, and driving it forward step-by-step.

UNDERSTANDING THE CAREER LANDSCAPE

CAREER REDEFINED

"An occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress."

For most of us, this textbook definition of a career is irrelevant and disconcerting. We're working, yet we certainly can't

“A single fixed identity is a liability today... The most successful and healthy among us now develop multiple identities, managed simultaneously, to be called upon as conditions change. - *Gail Sheehy, New Passages: Mapping your life across time*”

On average,
South Africans hold

13.5

jobs over a lifetime.

At 2.6 years per job, over 50+ years in the workforce, plus several temp assignments and contracts means that Gen Y can expect to hold

20-25

jobs over the course of a career.

categorise where we're going by that concept. The fact is that a career is vastly different to what it was 20 years ago. Into the future, and with the advent of new technologies, the definition of this concept will continue to change.

- A "career" is less likely to be at a single organisation or occupation over a lifetime.
- A "career" can include paid or unpaid work, part-time or full-time, within an employing organisation or self-employment.
- A "career" is no longer localised, and its path is determined by local and international factors.

NEW DYNAMICS

In 2014, more so than other years, the demographics of the workplace will shift. A large portion of the boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) will retire. A wealth of experience and traditional skills will be lost in many companies. Organisations will need to ensure that these practical skills and knowledge are compensated for this year, resulting in a strong emphasis on training and mentorship.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

Irrespective of what stage of your career you're in, or which generation you are a part of, the changing definition of a career and the rise of the millennial generation means that 2014 is introducing new rules for career success.

NEW RULES FOR CAREER SUCCESS

Being successful in 2014 means actively managing your career. This starts with having greater career awareness, because the greater your career awareness and understanding, the easier it is to take the lead.

How? There are a number of small, active steps you can take to start building greater career awareness:

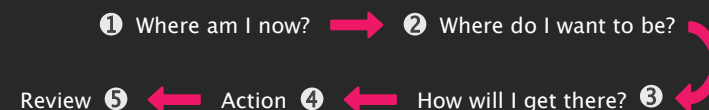
- Understand your personal aspirations
- Understand the type of work, recruitment methods, and career structures available to you
- Identify what support, training, and development is out there to help you grow

“A modern career is a path on which autonomy, mastery, and purpose intersect to achieve personal meaning – Sam Paddock, Co-CEO of GetSmarter”

- If you work for an employer, consult your HR Department to understand the growth opportunities from your current position
- Research job sites to look at what opportunities are advertised most frequently and what the requirements are for those positions
- Set up a meeting with an industry recruitment agent to understand the unique career landscape in which you work or would like to work
- Understand the wider economic, political, social, and technological climate
- Subscribe to industry newsletters to be aware of trends and career opportunities
- Attend industry networking events to interact with other professionals

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER

Taking charge of your career to propel it in the direction that suits you may sound like a great, yet very confusing, prospect. Devising a career action plan takes careful consideration, following 5 steps.



“The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind – William James”

“The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them –
George Bernard Shaw”

CONDUCT A PERSONAL AUDIT

Now that you have decided what is most important to you in a career, it is time to take stock of your current skills and knowledge. After prioritising what you want, it is time to identify what tools you have at your disposal to get there.

- What are you good at?
- What are you passionate about?
 - What skills have you developed over your career?
 - What feedback have you had regarding your strengths and weaknesses to date from peers or supervisors?
- What are your transferable skills?

WHERE AM I NOW?

The first step in taking your career into your own hands is putting time aside for personal reflection. It is vitally important to understand your priorities and skills, in order to realise your place in the job market, before setting realistic career goals.

DISCOVER YOUR CAREER PRIORITIES

Understanding your personal motivators will help you to make the right choices for the future. When you think of your career, what are the qualities you hold most significant?

Rank the following career attributes in order of importance to you (1 being most important, 10 being least important) and identify your top three career priorities:

- A career that helps others or the wider community
- A career that will develop my skills and education
- A career that makes a difference to my community
- A career where I work closely with other people
- A career that caters for my unique needs
- A career that is well-structured
- A career that offers time flexibility
- A career that others will envy
- A career that pays well
- A career that offers variety

‘Progress’
cited as the most highly
valued characteristic
of a job.

CAREER ACTION PLAN

You've identified what you want in a career, and what tools you have at hand to get there. You've researched potential opportunities and their requirements. It is now time to devise a cunning action plan. Take time setting your goals. Goal setting can be an extensive, yet rewarding, process.

SET REALISTIC (YET AMBITIOUS) GOALS

Setting clearly defined career goals allows you to stay continuously motivated, and track your career progress. By defining your goals, and taking action towards them, you will absolutely influence your self-efficacy and performance.

Quick tips: Express your goals positively. Identify what you want, not what you don't want. Be specific and set dates, times, and quantities where possible. Prioritise your goals, in order to devise which to focus on first.

You should begin by setting a group of medium- to long-term goals by asking yourself the following questions:

- Do you want a new job in the same industry?
- Do you want a new job in a different industry?
- Do you want to prepare for a promotion?
- Do you want to develop in your current role?
- Are you looking to develop your current business or develop a new one?



TIP

Draw up a list of career actions for yourself. Place the months of the year horizontally along the top. Tick off actions as you complete them throughout the year. This is a great way to reflect on your career action plan progress and record your achievements.

48%

of all employees seek out opportunities for continuous learning in South Africa.

Once you have identified your bigger goals, you can identify all the steps needed to get from where you are currently positioned, to where you want to be. These can be your "mini goals", and should be particularly specific and measurable.

Ask yourself the following questions to determine whether your goals are realistic:

- Do I have the right skills to achieve this goal?
- Can I learn something more through training or education that will help me achieve this goal?
- Are these goals attainable with my current lifestyle?
- Have I set a realistic time frame to achieve these goals?

FILL IN THE GAPS

In 2014, the eternal student rules the roost. Knowledge is developing at a rapid pace, and the greatest mistake of the modern employee is to be overconfident in your own expertise. After investigating the industry you are working in and setting your career goals, you should be able to identify specific areas where you need to develop your career resources (knowledge, networks, and skills). Of course, the idea of "going back to school" is daunting, and you may need to consider the following factors to find the best solution for your needs:

“As adults there is no curriculum to follow...except the goals we set ourselves – *Stuart McMillen*”

➤ **Time**

Does your schedule allow for full-time study, or is part-time the only option?
Are there any comprehensive short courses or evening study programmes that can fit into your schedule?

➤ **Learning style**

Are you able to work alone by correspondence, or do you need support and guidance while studying?

➤ **Price**

When looking at the cost, are you able to weigh it against the long-term benefit of the training? Are you paying for it personally, or is there a possibility that an employer or interested party may subsidise the training?

➤ **Objective**

Do you want to study merely to have the qualification on your CV, or is it primarily for your personal growth?

➤ **Service provider credibility and quality**

Is it a credible qualification? Will it be recognised by employers, and will it prepare me with the tangible outcomes I need? Does the learning institution have good reviews from past students, and is their customer service well recommended?

“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you – *B. B. King*”

TIP

When making the decision to further your studies, know what you are getting into by asking the right questions and doing your homework.

Ensure you understand the expected outcomes, the practical application and the learning model used before enrolling.

GET A MENTOR

Sometimes, you need a helping hand to support you in your career growth. This support will ensure that your career growth is sustainable in the long run. If you don't have an idea about who to ask to be your mentor, find organisations that work in the area you're interested in and look to their leaders. Ask this person out for a coffee, or find a project they might be interested in collaborating on with you. If you have decided to take a course, this is a perfect opportunity to interact with an industry expert, the instructor or lecturer, who will have a natural keen interest in your career development.

A suitable mentor is...

- Someone whose knowledge and experience you respect
- Someone whose wisdom and know-how can support your professional growth and development
- Someone who can “hold your hand” while you grow in your career

Or, do you need a coach?

A professional coach can provide insight into your strengths and weaknesses, personality type, and learning style; and aid you in developing your career. Sometimes an external expert can bring the insight and direction you need to set and achieve career goals.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

Moving forward in your career takes a proactive approach, going over and above what is expected from you. Here are some steps to power forward in 2014:

Step 1: Demonstrate a strong aptitude for growth

Identify 3 or 4 areas in your work that will enable you (and your company) to grow. Then invest in those areas through time and learning. Your growth should be quantifiable and benefit yourself and your colleagues.

Step 2: Think big and take risks

Trust yourself enough to take action. Go over and above what is expected. Bold people may not always win but, most of the time, they will be respected. Ask for what you want.

TIP

Record everything you do. You should have tangible proof of your value.

A recent Gallup Poll found that

70%

of adults would seek more career information if they could start over.

Step 3: Ask for feedback

Prompt the people you work with for constructive feedback. Learn from your mistakes. Work on your weaknesses.

Step 4: Prioritise

Communication overload is a challenge. Systemise your communication. Rank importance.

Step 5: Be innovative

Demonstrate your unique value by becoming an entrepreneur within your organisation or industry. Out-of-the-box thinking and well thought-through, impromptu suggestions reap rewards.

HOW TO MAKE A CHANGE

If you have identified that your goal is to take your career in a new direction, whether by moving industries or starting a new business, your first point of action needs to be to put yourself out there and open the door for opportunities. How? By building your personal brand.

“Success comes from curiosity, concentration, perseverance, and self-criticism – *Albert Einstein*

Work to become, not to acquire – *Elbert Hubbar*”

“We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called YOU – Tom Peters, *Fast Company* magazine”

MARKETING YOUR “YOU” BRAND

In 2014, you are the “product” in the talent market. You need to differentiate yourself and stand out from the crowd, by identifying and communicating your unique value, and using this as leverage to achieve specific goals.

Branding is about developing a coherent message about who you are, and what you have to offer. A strong brand gives you credibility and makes you memorable to colleagues, clients, and potential employers. There are three aspects of personal branding to take into account.

1 Positioning

> Have you selected a niche for your personal brand?

2 Brand everything

- > Do you dress professionally- to suit your brand?
- > Are you branding your work?
- > Does your online presence reflect your professional brand?

3 Leverage other brands

- > Are you connected to the right people on professional sites?
- > Are you getting recommendations from former employees, or industry thought leaders about your work? Are these visible to others?
- > Do you build the brands of other professionals and allow them to do the same for you?



“The quality of your life is the quality of your relationships – Anthony Robbins”

ON THE JOB HUNT

Traditional job hunt tactics are outdated in 2014. Forget about buying the newspaper and concentrate on networking.

CONTACTS CONTACTS CONTACTS

It's (almost) all about who you know. Globally, most people find jobs through contacts, and the most favoured recruitment strategy used by employers is employee referrals. Networking is an essential career management tool.

1 Take initiative

Invest in the skills, time, and confidence to make new connections. Contacts are made through social ties, pre-existing work networks, and learning networks.

2 Be a pro listener

Listening builds trust. Write useful personal information down.

3 Understand conversation

Spark conversations, don't dominate them. Have engaging, snack-sized content and good questions at the ready for when conversation wanes.

4 Optimise social media

Leverage various platforms strategically to widen your personal and professional circles. It's never been easier to stay in touch.

“It always seems impossible until it's done – Nelson Mandela”

ABOUT US

At GetSmarter, our goal is to support you in achieving great things in your career. As a premier online education company, we partner with prestigious universities and leading organisations to offer a wide range of part-time, full-time, and corporate educational programmes and solutions.

OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES INCLUDE:

Online short courses

Currently we partner with the University of Cape Town, Random House Struik, and the Sports Science Institute of South Africa to offer **over 50** continuing education short courses across a number of categories, including Marketing, Finance, Management, Business, Writing, Creative, and Health and Wellness short courses. Designed to suit the lifestyle of the working professional, these courses are presented part-time and online throughout South Africa.

>> [Click here to find out more.](#)

University of Cape Town College of Accounting Board Course

GetSmarter partners with the University of Cape Town College of Accounting to present the UCT Board Course; the suite of preparatory courses for the SAICA Initial Test of Competence (ITC) and the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) Board qualifying exams for Trainee Accountants.

>> [Click here to find out more.](#)

University of Cape Town Postgraduate Diploma in Management (Marketing)

In partnership with the University of Cape Town's Faculty of Commerce, GetSmarter will soon offer the Postgraduate Diploma in Management (Marketing) as a blended, credit-bearing programme to business professionals with an interest in marketing.

Customised solutions

Our Business Solutions Division provides customised online education solutions that meet the unique business needs of our clients.

>> [Click here to find out more.](#)

Advance your career in 2014 by investing in continued learning with us.

For more information visit www.getsmarter.co.za.

ARE YOU LINKED IN?

LinkedIn is a professional network at your fingertips. Apart from providing a bank of useful industry news and information for users, SA recruiters are also using LinkedIn to find suitable candidates. A great LinkedIn profile may get you the job, even if you're not looking for it.

Keep an eye out for the next GetSmarter guide to be released in early 2014, taking you through managing and marketing your personal brand.

THANK YOU FOR READING THE 2014 CAREER GUIDE

2014 is about being pro-active and pushing for what you want. We all need to take the time to identify exactly what we want, and how we are going to get there. This process is daunting, yet doable. Keep at it, get through it, and charge your career forward this year.

LinkedIn reached over

2.5 million

SA users in 2013.

Global trends indicate that

LinkedIn

is the most-used social recruitment tool with Facebook and Twitter second and third respectively.